DOCKET NO.: MSFT-0689
Application No.: 10/037,993
Office Action Dated: April 19, 2005

PATENT
REPLY FILED UNDER EXPEDITED
PROCEDURE PURSUANT TO
37 CFR § 1.116

REMARKS

Claims 1-27 stand rejected. Claims 12 and 20 were canceled. Claim 1-11, 13-19, and 21-27 remain in the application. Applicants respectfully request reconsideration of the application in view of the following remarks.

Claim Rejections – 35 USC § 112

Claims 12 and 21 were objected to under 35 USC § 112 as being indefinite. In response, Applicants have canceled the claims.

Claim rejections – 35 USC § 102(e)

Claims 1-11 and 13-20 were rejected under 35 USC § 102(e) as anticipated by Wolfman et al. (USPA Pub. 2002/0040363). Applicants respectfully disagree.

Regarding the rejection of claim 1, the examiner has indicated that Wolfman et al. teach a method for classification that includes the steps of searching a data structure including an indication that "Wolfman teaches the claimed step of 'providing a link to at least one web page corresponding to the matching key phrases' as the information 26 item may be stored on a web page (Fig. 2, page 2, paragraph 0021)." The examiner went on to opine that "[f]inally, Wolfman teaches the claim step of 'providing a link to at least two nodes having a relation to at least one key phrase matching the search term whereby a user can browse the link from the node to find web pages related to the node' as link 28 may be any type of link including an HTML link, a URL link or a path to a directory or file (Fig. 2, page 2, paragraph 0021)."

Applicants have again amended the claim to clarify that the two different nodes have a relationship to the same key phrase matching the search term "based on *different* meanings of the same term whereby a user can browse a selected one of the at least two links from the node to find web pages related to the node." This distinction provides the user with the ability to user to enter a search term that may have multiple different meanings and then further refine the results by selecting the meaning that was initially intended by the user. For example, a user may enter a search term "Lincoln" and the browser may return multiple nodes related to the concept of Lincoln that have very different meanings. The user may have intended to search on "Lincoln Nebraska," "Lincoln Continental" (the car), or "Abraham Lincoln" the president. In order to further refine the result set, a user is presented

with the set of nodes that related to the same search term, but which have very different concepts. The Applicant submits that claim 1, as amended, patentably defines over Wolfman.

Regarding independent claim 13, the examiner indicated that "Wolfman teaches the claimed step of 'receiving a plurality of links to *web pages* related to the search term wherein each node has a relation to a plurality of web pages wherein the nodes relate to different concepts of the same search term' as different nodes 22 may contain same keywords." Action, p 7. Applicants submit that the examiner has misunderstood the claim. The claim actually recites "receiving a plurality of links to *nodes* related to the search term wherein each node has a relation to a plurality of web pages wherein the nodes relate to different concepts of the same search term." This distinction between nodes and web pages is important because the purpose of the node is to allow the user to clarify the intended meaning of the original search and then browse on a plurality of links that relate to the intended concept. For example, a search on the term "Lincoln" could indicate that the user intended "Lincoln, Nebraska" or "Lincoln Continental." By returning both nodes, the user is able to select the node more indicative of the original search concept and thereby refine the results based in the intended concept. For that reason, applicants submit that claim 13 also patentably defines over the art of record.

Regarding the rejection of independent claims 2-11 and 14-20, Applicants submit that they also define over the art of record at least for the reasons set forth above with respect to the independent claims from which they depend.

Claim Rejections – 35 USC § 103

Claims 22-27 were rejected under 35 USC § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Wolfman et al. (USPA Pub. 2002/0040363) in view of Goerz, JR. et al. (USPA Pub. 2002/0065671).

Regarding independent claims 22, applicants have amended the claim to clarify the claimed invention. As the amendment makes clear, the invention relates to returning search results in the form of nodes in a hierarchical set of nodes whereby a user can browse through the tree to a selected web site and also provides a set of search results that matched the initial search term whereby the user can immediately select a web site without additional browsing.

DOCKET NO.: MSFT-0689
Application No.: 10/037,993
Office Action Dated: April 19, 2005

PATENT
REPLY FILED UNDER EXPEDITED
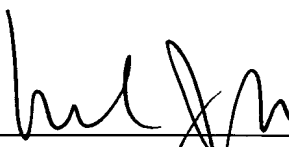PROCEDURE PURSUANT TO
37 CFR § 1.116

Applicants amended claim clarifies that the claimed invention provides multiple nodes wherein the nodes relate to different concepts of the same search term. In this way, a user is able to clarify an initial search. For example, a search on the term "Lincoln" could indicate that the user intended "Lincoln, Nebraska" or "Lincoln Continental." By returning both nodes, the user is able to select the node more indicative of the original search concept. Moreover, the user is provided with a set of web sites matching the search term.

Inasmuch as dependent claims 23-27 depend from claim 22, Applicants submit that they also patentably define over Wolfman et al. in view of Goerz, JR. et al. at least for the reasons set forth above with respect to claim 22.

CONCLUSION

Early consideration and allowance of the above-referenced patent application is respectfully requested.

Date: June 13, 2005

Michael J. Swope
Registration No. 38,041

Woodcock Washburn LLP
One Liberty Place - 46th Floor
Philadelphia PA 19103
Telephone: (215) 568-3100
Facsimile: (215) 568-3439